

Penthouse Bares CIA Link to News Service

By JOSEPH VOLZ

Washington (News Bureau)—Penthouse magazine reports that 23 news employees of the San Diego-based Copley New Service were paid by the CIA to provide intelligence from Latin America.

An article by Joseph Trento and David Roman in the magazine's August issue says that the late James Copley volunteered his news service as "the eyes and ears against the Communist threat in Latin and Central America" in a 1953 meeting with President Eisenhower. Eisenhower reportedly told Copley that "your favors are appreciated by the country and will be reciprocated when possible."

The authors said their information was obtained from secret White House and CIA documents now in the hands of CIA officials. The writers declined to name the 23 news employees or discuss how much they were paid.

Qualified Denials

Charles Ohl, Copley executive news editor, said it was "conceivable" that part-time reporters in Latin America might have received money from the local CIA station chief without the knowledge of company executives. But he said that in the 13 years he has been with Copley, he knew of no instances

where any Copley employees received any money from the CIA.

Ohl said that Trento, 29, lost a primary election for Congress last year on the Democratic side. Copley traditionally backs Republican candidates.

Roman is a former San Diego journalist.

Victor Krulak, a former Marine Corps general who retired as president of the news service after nine years in June, also denied the charges, Penthouse said. But he qualified it "by stating that he could not speak for individuals or stringers who worked for" Copley News Service.

Has Many Federal Officials

Krulak, one-time liaison between the Joint chiefs of Staff and the intelligence services, is one of the numerous top military men and federal officials who have joined the Copley organization. Currently holding top posts with Copley are Ricahrd Capen, a former assistant secretary of defense, and Gerald Warren, a former White House spokesman.



In Washington, writer Joe Trento says Copley newsmen worked for CIA.

A CIA spokesman had no comment, his usual response when asked about agency activities.

The article made these other allegations:

- Copley, whose major papers are the San Diego Union and Evening Tribune, provided press credentials and information and placed stories for the CIA and FBI.
- Copley fed stories to news service clients at the request of the CIA and FBI.
- The newspaper group turned over reporters' notes on the antiwar movement and minority community to the FBI.

Penthouse contends that "out of the 194 U.S. newsmen having CIA connections, Copley was the only organization that the CIA had full cooperation with for nearly three decades until Copley died in 1973."

Former CIA Director William Colby has conceded that in the past, the CIA used American newsmen overseas. But he said it now does not pay any reporters employed by U.S. news organizations.

Gene Gregston, former San Diego Union editor, told the magazine that the news service was a "money-losing operation." He said that "it was an ego and the CIA wanted it. A lot of people around here have ren, a former White House spokesman.